



Craig McNamara
Board President
Owner, Sierra Orchards

March 30, 2015

Joshua Eddy
Executive Director

Ashley Boren Executive
Director Sustainable
Conservation

Donald Bransford, Owner
Bransford Farms

Don Cameron, General
Manager, Terranova
Ranch, Inc.

Nancy Casady General
Manager Ocean Beach
People's Organic Food
Co-Op

Helene Dillard, Dean
College of Agricultural
And Environmental
Sciences, University of
California, Davis

Ben Drake, President
Drake Enterprises

Michael Gallo, Co-owner
Joseph Gallo Farms

Eric Holst, Senior
Director, Environmental
Defense Fund

Mary Holz-Clause, Dean
College of Agriculture
California State
Polytechnic University,
Pomona

Bryce Lundberg, Vice
President, Lundberg
Family Farms

Martha Montoya,
President,
Los Kitos Produce

Miles Reiter,
Chairman and CEO,
Driscoll Strawberry
Associates, Inc.

Joy Sterling, CEO
Iron Horse Vineyards

Rodney Taylor, Director,
Riverside Unified School
District

The Honorable Karen Ross
California Department of Food and Agriculture
1220 N Street, Suite 400
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Secretary Ross:

The California State Board of Food and Agriculture has formed a Water Committee to focus on several water concerns, especially water operations during the ongoing drought. There are several critical issues facing California's farmers and ranchers during this drought period and we wish to submit these issues for immediate consideration before the Drought Task Force.

It is the Water Committee's recommendation that the following issues be addressed:

Water Operations The operations of the Central Valley Project (CVP) and State Water Project (SWP) are critical for California during dry years. During the recent dry years, the operations of these projects have had a significant impact on California's farmers and ranchers.

With respect to the CVP, water service contractors are receiving an initial zero percent of their allocations throughout the Central Valley. Additionally, the specified contract supplies for both the Sacramento River Settlement Contractors and the Exchange Contractors are being challenged by the various fishery agencies in their efforts to provide cold water for spawning salmon. We strongly encourage the Administration and the Drought Task Force to assist the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) in its efforts to operate the CVP to fully satisfy its contractual obligations to water suppliers and wildlife refuges, while helping to maintain cold water releases to benefit salmon. More specifically, we further encourage the Administration to strongly support Reclamation's drought contingency plan and temperature management plan, which have both been developed in a very thoughtful manner to accomplish these multiple objectives and to help California through this difficult period. It is very important for California's farmers and ranchers that Reclamation implement these plans immediately with the full support of the Administration.

We appreciated the continuing collaborative effort of the State Water Resources Control Board in working with federal and state agencies to find a beneficial resolution for all parties. Urgency on this issue is needed as planting decisions by farmers are being made which will impact local economies and jobs. All parties



have recognized that solutions to the CVP operational challenges must be resolved by early April.

For the SWP, we encourage the Administration to maximize the deliveries of water to water suppliers with contracts with the Department of Water Resources, including both agricultural and urban water suppliers.

Federal/State Agricultural Programs & Water Information: It is the Committee's recommendation that CDFA take an active role with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to increase outreach and the dissemination of information regarding drought assistance programs. This fourth year of drought will have significant impacts on farming communities throughout the state and expanding outreach and program enrollment will be beneficial to individuals and communities. Further, CDFA should work with agency counterparts to provide additional outreach regarding actions and decisions being undertaken by regulatory water agencies.

Emergency Food and Residential Well Assistance Programs: As part of the Emergency Drought Legislation, funding was provided for the Emergency Food Assistance Program. This critical program provides much needed assistance to impacted communities throughout the state. The Committee recommends that CDFA coordinate with the California Department of Social Services, the California Association of Food Banks, California Emergency Foodlink and the California Partnership for the San Joaquin Valley in promoting the availability and applicability of food assistance programs, especially within farmworker communities. We also recommend that CDFA work with other state agencies to assist in providing outreach and information to residential well owners impacted by drought and the programs/services available to them.

As California endures a fourth consecutive drought year, our rural farming communities are facing a period of unprecedented vulnerability. We greatly appreciate the dedication and hard work of the many federal, state and local officials who continue to address impacts from the drought on a daily basis. Only by working together can we minimize the human and environmental harms that this drought threatens to cause.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bryce Lundberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bryce Lundberg
Chairman

cc: California State Board of Food and Agriculture